Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties number: B-4567

Name: WILKENS AVE. OVER CHESSIE SYSTEM.

The bridge referenced herein was inventoried by the Maryland State Highway Administration as part of the Historic Bridge Inventory, and SHA provided the Trust with eligibility determinations in February 2001. The Trust accepted the Historic Bridge Inventory on April 3, 2001. The bridge received the following determination of eligibility.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

Eligibility Recommended _____ Eligibility Not Recommended __X___

Criteria: ___A ___B __X__C ___D Considerations: ___A ___B ___C ___D ___E ___F ___G __None

Comments: _____

_____

_____

Reviewer, OPS: _Anne E. Bruder_____ Date: __3 April 2001____

Reviewer, NR Program: __Peter E. Kurtze_____ Date: __3 April 2001____

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties MHT Number B-4567
Historic Bridge Inventory
Maryland State Highway Administration
Maryland Historical Trust

Name and SHA No. BC 5203

Location:
Street/Road Name and Number: Wilkens Avenue over Chessie System

City/Town: Baltimore Vicinity __

County: _____

Ownership: __State__County_X_Municipal__Other

This bridge projects over: __Road_X_Railway__Water__Land

Is the bridge located within a designated district:__yes_X_no

__NR listed district__NR determined eligible district
__locally designated__other
Name of District_____

Bridge Type:

__Timber Bridge
__Beam Bridge__Truss-Covered__Trestle
__Timber-and-Concrete

__Stone Arch

__Metal Truss

__Movable Bridge
__Swing __Bascule Single Leaf__Bascule Multiple Leaf
__Vertical Lift__Retractile__Pontoon

_X_Metal Girder
_X_Rolled Girder __Rolled Girder Concrete Encased
__Plate Girder __Plate Girder Concrete Encased

__Metal Suspension

__Metal Arch

__Metal Cantilever

__Concrete
__Concrete Arch __Concrete Slab__Concrete Beam
__Rigid Frame
__Other Type Name_____

Description:

Describe Setting:

Bridge Number BC5203 carries Wilkens Avenue in a generally east-west direction over the Chessie System tracks in the City of Baltimore, Maryland. The approach to the roadway is level and has four lanes. The area around this bridge is urban and residential. The structures in the vicinity of this bridge are generally from the early twentieth century.

Describe Superstructure and Substructure:

Bridge Number BC5203 is a single span structure, measuring 47 feet in total length. Bridge Number BC5203 is a rolled I-beam deck structure. The roadway width from curb to curb is sixty feet and the total deck width is 72.2 feet. There are sidewalks on both sides of the bridge and the width of each is 51 feet.

The superstructure is composed of a steel I-beam girder deck system. There is one span in the main bridge unit and no approach units. The long span is 41 feet long. There are four stringers in the structure. The stringer spacing averages five feet. The floor system is composed of concrete cast-in-place. The joints are made of a single compression seal. There are two rectangular concrete parapets. There is little ornamentation. There are no historical plaques.

The substructure is composed of concrete integral abutments. The piers and columns are also concrete. There is no ornamentation. There are no historical plaques.

The condition of this bridge is currently rated good with little section loss, deterioration, or spalling.

Discuss Major Alterations:

There have been two major alterations to this structure. These occurred in 1937 and 1991 and involved a widening of the bridge and replacement of most of the superstructure. All structural elements of this bridge are new.

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History:
When Built:1900, reconstructed 1937 and 1991
Why Built: Increased traffic density necessitated a structure with an increased load capacity.
Who Built: State Roads Commission
Why Altered: Structural Weakness
Was this bridge built as part of an organized bridge building campaign: Bridge built for a hazardous grade elimination program.

Surveyor Analysis:
This bridge may have NR significance for association with:
__A Events __Person
__C Engineering/Architectural

Was this bridge constructed in response to significant events in Maryland or local history:

No. In 1899 the Maryland Geological Survey published "Report on the Highways of Maryland." This report found Maryland bridges to generally be in poor condition. Reforms were recommended to improve this problem. One of the solutions involved the use of modern steel girders to replace iron and timber bridges.

When the bridge was built and/or given a major alteration, did it have a significant impact on the growth and development of the area?

No. Bridge BC5203 did not have a significant impact on the Mt. Claire area. This structure was built to satisfy local needs but its function can be met through other transportation options. Bridge BC5203 certainly had an impact on the immediate concerns of locals, other options keep this impact from being significant.

Is the bridge located in an area which may be eligible for historic designation and would the bridge add to or detract from historic and visual character of the possible district?

No. Bridge BC5203 is located in an area with little or no historic significance. This area has had a wide variety of unconnected developments. There is little in this area that could considered in the future for eligibility. The loss of this bridge would not detract from the historic or visual character of this area.

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Is the bridge a significant example of its type?

Yes. Bridge BC5203 is a significant variation of a common bridge construction type. Steel girder bridges were built prolifically across Maryland from the late nineteenth century to the present day. There is often little variation in the many of these bridges. Bridge BC5203 shows unique variation of style. These differences set this structure apart from other bridges of this type.

Does the bridge retain integrity of the important elements described in the Context Addendum?

No. The reconstruction 1991 replaced too many of the primary elements.

Should this bridge be given further study before significance analysis is made and Why?

No. This bridge does not retain sufficient elements of historical structural integrity to qualify for further study.

B-4567

Bibliography:

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1917-24 Annual Report of the Highways Engineer. Baltimore, Maryland.

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1993 Bridge Inventory. Baltimore, Maryland.

U.S. Department of the Interior
1990 National Register Bulletin Number 15. National Park Service. Washington D.C.

U.S. Department of Transportation
1991 Bridge Inspectors Manual. Federal Highway Administration. Washington D.C.

Surveyor:

Name: Andrew M. Watts **Date:** March 1996
Organization: State Highway Administration **Telephone:** (410) 321-2213
Address: 2323 West Joppa Road, Brooklandville, MD 21022


Maryland Historic Highway Bridges
Bridge Type Metal Girder B-4567
Map D-12 Baltimore SW
County Baltimore City
Bridge # and name BC 5203/Wilkens Ave. over Chessie Railroad
Lake Ashburton
Mondawmin
DRUID LAKE
WALBROOK
ROSEMONT
FALLS PATH FIELD PARK
EASTERWOOD PARK
ST. PETERS CEMETERY
SANDTOWN
HARLEM PARK M.S.
WEST BALTIMORE
NEW CATHEDRAL CEMETERY
SOUTHWESTERN H.S.
MT. OLIVET CEMETERY
MOUNT CLARE S.C.
MT. CLARE MANSION
CARROLL IND. PARK
GOLF COURSE
CARDINAL GIBBONS H.S.
ST. AGNES HOSPITAL
CROSSROADS IND. PARK
LOUDON PARK
WILKEN PLAZA
GWYNNS
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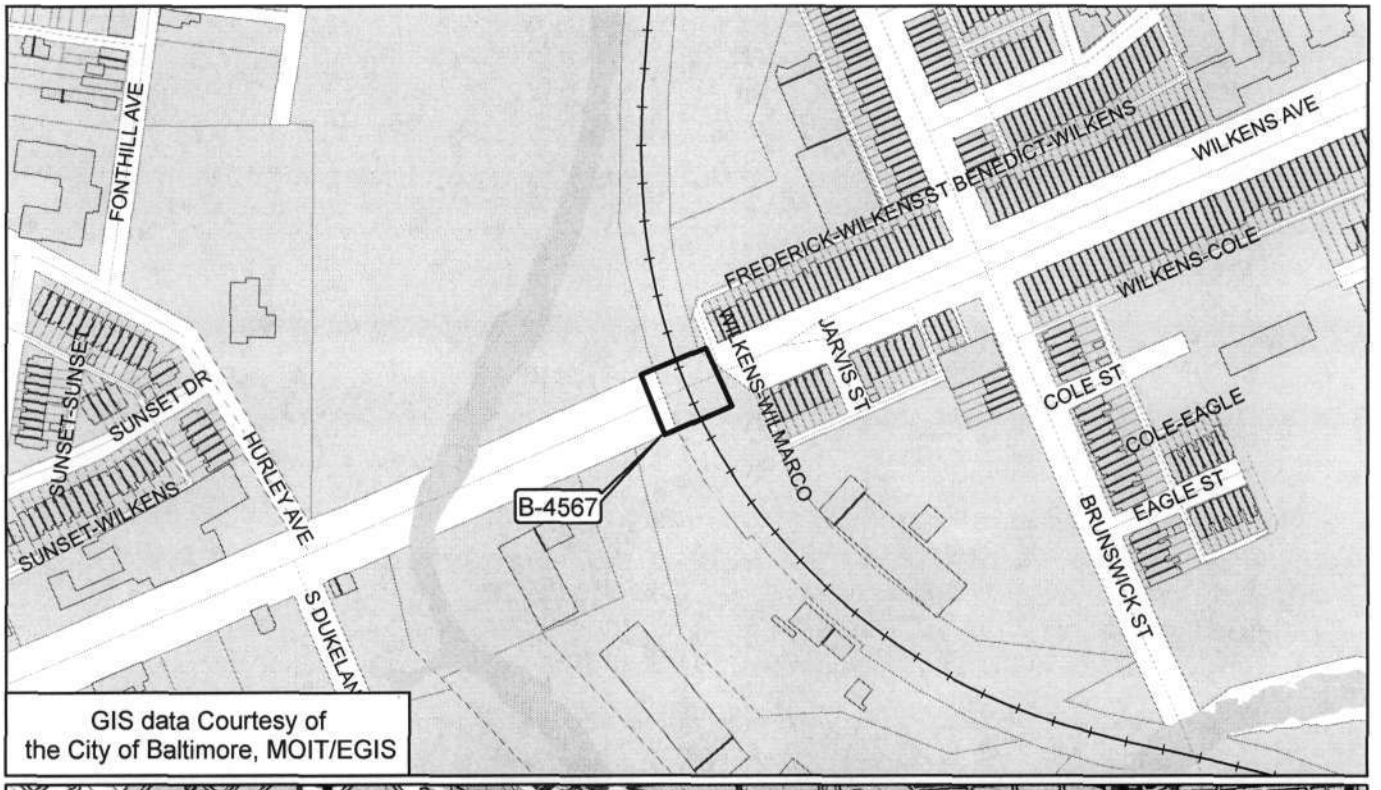
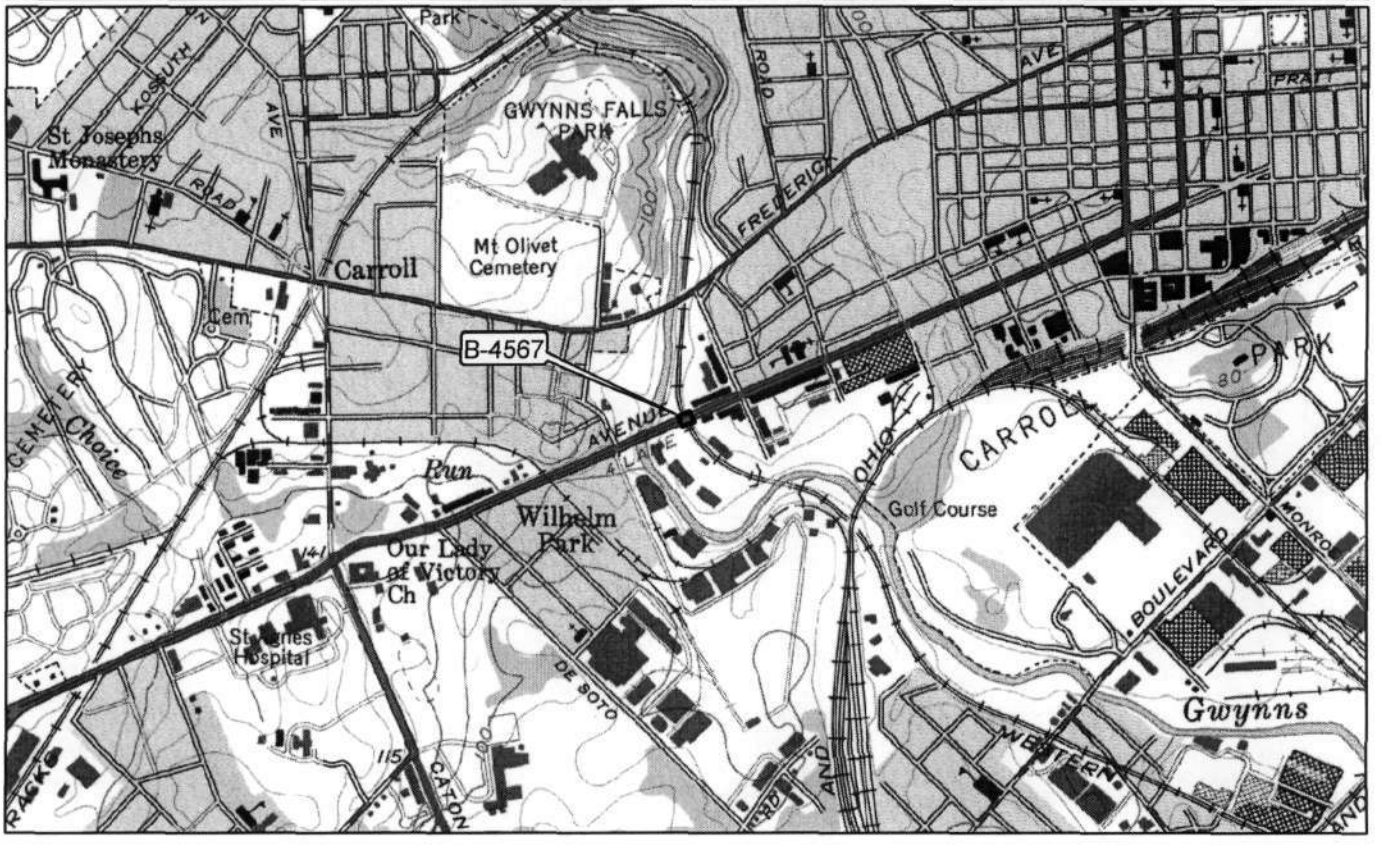
Bridge 5203, Wilkens Avenue over Chessie System
Baltimore City
Baltimore West Quad.



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Inventory # B-4567

Name 5203-WILKENS AVE OVER CSX RR
County/State BALTIMORE CITY / MD
Name of Photographer TIM SCHOEN
Date 1/95

Location of Negative SHA

Description EAST APPROACH

Number 1 ~~2~~ of ~~3~~ 4

Inventory # B-4567

Name 5203-WILKENS AVE OVER CSX RR
County/State BALTIMORE CITY / MD
Name of Photographer TIM SCHOEN
Date 1/95

Location of Negative SHA

Description WEST APPROACH

Number 22 of 37 → 2 of 4


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Inventory # B-4567

Name 5203-WILKENS AVE OVER CSX RR
County/State BALTIMORE CITY / MD
Name of Photographer TIM SCHOEN
Date 1/95

Location of Negative SHA

Description NORTH ELEVATION

Number 3 ~~23~~ of 3~~7~~4

Inventory # B-4567

Name 5203- WILKENS AVE OVER CSX RR
County/State BALTIMORE CITY/MD
Name of Photographer TIM SCHOEN
Date 1/95

Location of Negative SHA

Description SOUTH ELEVATION

Number 4 ~~24~~ of 37 4